

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD
+ + + + +
MEETING

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IN THE MATTER OF: :
:
Eleana, LLC :
t/a Secret Lounge :
Retailer CT - ANC 1B :
1928 9th Street NW : Protest
License No. 107123 : Hearing (Status)
Case #22-PRO-00118 :
:
(Application to Renew :
the License) :
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Wednesday
March 1, 2023

The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board
met via WebEx videoconference, Chairperson
Donovan W. Anderson presiding.

PRESENT:

- DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Chairperson
BOBBY CATO, JR., Member
RAFI ALIYA CROCKETT, Member
EDWARD S. GRANDIS, Member
JENI HANSEN, Member
JAMES SHORT, JR., Member

ALSO PRESENT:

- JOSE ORELLANA, DC ABRA Staff
DEREJE DANEALE, Applicant
RICHARD BIANCO, Applicant Counsel
SABEL HARRIS, ANC 1B

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 10:49 a.m.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning,
4 everyone. We're on the record.

5 Good morning, everyone. As
6 Chairperson of the Alcoholic Beverage Control
7 Board for the District of Columbia and in
8 accordance with D.C. Code Section 2-571 et. seq.
9 of the Open Meetings Act, OMA, I'm welcoming you
10 to the regularly scheduled meeting of the
11 Alcoholic Beverage Control Board.

12 This meeting is being conducted
13 pursuant to guidance made available by the
14 District of Columbia's Office of Open Government
15 regarding electronic meetings held by public
16 bodies. Electronic meetings by the ABC Board are
17 authorized pursuant to Section 2577(a) of the
18 D.C. Code.

19 Pursuant to the OMA requirements,
20 notice of today's meeting was provided 48 hours
21 in advance of the meeting on ABRA's website and
22 on the District's Central Meeting Calendar.

23 The notice included the time, date
24 agenda, and call-in or login information for
25 public participation. This electronic meeting is

1 being hosted by a WebEx account provided by the
2 District of Columbia Government. Please address
3 any questions or complaints to the OOG at
4 opengovoffice@dc.gov.

5 My name is Donovan Anderson. I'm
6 chairman of the board.

7 I would like to introduce the other
8 members of the ABC Board who are also
9 participating electronically. Please respond
10 when I announce your name.

11 Mr. James Short.

12 MEMBER SHORT: Mr. James Short
13 present.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Bobby Cato.

15 MEMBER CATO: Bobby Cato present.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Rafi
17 Crockett.

18 MEMBER CROCKETT: Rafi Crockett
19 present.

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Jeni
21 Hansen.

22 MEMBER HANSEN: Jeni Hansen present.

23 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Edward
24 Grandis.

25 MEMBER GRANDIS: Edward Grandis

1 present.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: The Board has
3 six members in attendance for the conduct of
4 business today, and that constitutes a quorum.

5 Before we get underway with today's
6 hearing calendar, I need to make a few
7 instructions very clear so that the conduct of
8 these hearings is understood by everyone.

9 There are 13 cases on this morning's
10 calendar, once your case is called, it will take
11 a moment for our IT specialist to elevate the
12 rights for each party to enable their camera and
13 microphone. Then, and only then, will you have
14 the ability to enable your equipment.

15 If your case is not being heard, you
16 will remain mute and your camera will be
17 disabled.

18 At the conclusion of each case, the
19 parties will have the option to leave. If the
20 party chooses to stay, all cameras and
21 microphones for the concluded case will be
22 disabled.

23 Should you have any questions or
24 require technical assistance during the hearing,
25 please submit them using the question and answer

1 feature.

2 Before I call the first case, I just
3 want to apologize to the members of the public
4 for our late start this morning.

5 We were scheduled to start at 10:30
6 but our administrative meeting went much longer,
7 so I apologize that we did not start on time.

8 All right. Our first order of
9 business today is case -- this is a protest
10 hearing status, Case Number 22-PRO-00118 Secret
11 Lounge, license number 107123.

12 Good morning, Mr. Orellana. Can you
13 please elevate the rights of the Licensee and the
14 Protestant in this case, please?

15 MR. ORELLANA: Dereje Daneale, your
16 access has been elevated.

17 That appears to be everyone, Chairman.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Mr.
19 Daneale?

20 MR. DANEALE: Yes, good morning. How
21 are you?

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Can you please
23 elevate Mr. Bianco, please?

24 Also, Mr. Bianco is elevated.

25 Miss, can you please elevate Sabel

1 Harris for 1B, also, please?

2 MR. ORELLANA: Sabel Harris, Richard
3 Bianco, your access has been elevated.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Daneale, do
5 you have a camera you can turn on, sir?

6 I know that since Mr. Bianco is here,
7 so it's not that pertinent, but If you do --

8 (Simultaneous speaking.)

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, sir?

10 MR. DANEALE: Derege Daneale.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you have a
12 camera you can turn on, sir?

13 MR. DANEALE: I try, it failed.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
15 That's okay.

16 All right. So, let's -- I'll have the
17 parties introduce themselves for the record.

18 Let's start with Mr. Bianco. Can you
19 please spell and state your name for the record,
20 please?

21 MR. BIANCO: Sure. Good morning, Mr.
22 Anderson.

23 Richard Bianco, R-I-C-H-A-R-D, B-I-A-
24 N-C-O, I am counsel for the Applicant.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning.

1 Mr. Daneale, can you please spell and
2 state your name for the record, please?

3 MR. DANEALE: It's Dereje Daneale, D-
4 E-R-E-J-E, last name's Daneale, D-A-N-E-A-L-E.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And what's your
6 relationship to this establishment, sir?

7 MR. DANEALE: It's Owner.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning.

9 Good morning, Ms. Harris. Can you
10 please spell and state your name for the record,
11 please?

12 MS. HARRIS: Good morning. I'm Sabel
13 Harris, S-A-B-E-L, H-A-R-R-I-S. And I represent
14 ANC 1B.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning.

16 All right. Good morning, everyone.
17 This is the protest hearing status for this case.

18 Mr. Bianco, are there any preliminary
19 matters you want to bring to the attention of the
20 Board?

21 MR. BIANCO: Nothing from the
22 Applicant.

23 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Harris, any
24 preliminary matters you want to bring to The
25 Board?

1 MS. HARRIS: We are still negotiating
2 a settlement agreement, so we're still in the
3 process of that.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
5 Thank you.

6 I know that a mediation was scheduled
7 on January 12, it doesn't appear that the ANC
8 appeared. But if the parties wish us to schedule
9 another mediation, please let us know.

10 All right. If this matter is not
11 settled, it's scheduled for a protest hearing on
12 March 29, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

13 Any questions by anyone?

14 MR. BIANCO: Nothing from the
15 Applicant.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And what I
17 would ask the parties, if this matter will
18 definitely be settled, please try to do that and
19 inform the Agency as soon as possible so we do
20 not have to assign an investigator to this case.

21 So, that's all I'll ask. I'm not
22 saying if it -- if you believe that it's truly
23 going to be settled, then I will say, advise the
24 Agency. And so, therefore we will not assign an
25 investigator to this case.

1 All right. Do I need to read the
2 instructions for a protest hearing, or are the
3 parties familiar with the instructions?

4 MR. BIANCO: We'll waive reading of
5 that.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Harris?

7 The only thing I just want to remind
8 the parties is that, if this matter goes to a
9 hearing, seven before the hearing, you are
10 required to submit your PIF.

11 Failure by either side to provide the
12 Agency with a PIF, unless good cause is shown,
13 the Board is empowered to prevent that side from
14 moving forward.

15 I also want to advise the parties
16 that, if this matter goes to a hearing, each side
17 is limited to no more than four witnesses, and
18 you'll have one hour to present your case. Okay?

19 So, good luck with your negotiation
20 and, if this matter is now settled, I'll see you
21 on March 29, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

22 Thank you very much.

23 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
24 went off the record at 10:56 a.m.)

25

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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Secret Lounge

Before: DC ABRA

Date: 03-01-23

Place: teleconference

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate complete record of the proceedings.



Court Reporter

NEAL R. GROSS

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